

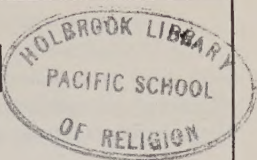
CHINA BULLETIN

of the

FAR EASTERN OFFICE

Division of Foreign Missions, NCCC/USA

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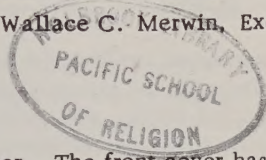


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Cis P. Jones, Editor

Wallace C. Merwin, Executive Secretary



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The December 21 Tien Feng is a Christmas number. The front cover has a good reproduction of Raphael's Madonna del Granduca, and the feature article is a Christmas message by the Anglican Presiding Bishop Robin Chen, with the title "Thoughts on the 1959 Christmas." Rev. Ch Yung-ch'ing writes on "Christmas Then and Now." The words of the Christmas carol "The First Nowell" are given set to a new Chinese tune. Theological professor Huang P'ei-hsin writes on "He Shall Speak Peace to the Nations", and Rev. Henry Sun (Methodist, Shanghai) on "Christmas Eve Meditations". Rev. George Wu (also Methodist, Shanghai) writes on "Christmas in America", in which he castigates the commercialization of Christmas prevalent in America, and still more the negation of the Christmas spirit by exploitation and aggression.

Bishop Chen and Rev. Hsieh both compare Christmas of 1959 with that of ten years before, and find much to be thankful for. Bishop Chen points out the great changes that have taken place in the church, how it has been liberated from all foreign control and become a real Chinese church. As a result he thinks it is purer, stronger, more united and more Christian. "The whole Christian Church in China is strongly united on an anti-imperialistic patriotic basis, the religious life of its members is properly cared for, and the church has truly become a place for glorifying God and serving man. Today's church workers, and especially the pastors, have an opportunity to engage in social activities and to meet new people and things, and thus in this time when "one day is like 20 years" (in its accomplishments) they can go forward together with the Chinese people.

Finally he gives thanks that "Peace on Earth" is so much more a reality now. With the rapidly increasing power of the Communist bloc as over against the capitalist nations the peace of the world is more and more assured, for now the capitalists, who are the only ones who want war, are now afraid to start one. "Therefore let all Chinese Christians today join with loud voices and joyful hearts in the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased."

DAHLBERG IN FORMOSA

Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, President of the National Council of Churches of America, visited Formosa in December. Because of the recommendation for recognition of Red China which was adopted by the World Order Study Conference of the NCCC in Cleveland in November 1958, he was greeted with considerable suspicion and criticism. When asked to clarify his own position he stated frankly: "My personal conviction regarding this NCCC World Study Group recommendation is that I am in complete agreement with their report. Furthermore I think that years from now we will look back to this as one of the great steps of the Christian Church. I do not think that the NCCC will repudiate the recommendation of the World Order Study Group."

Published bi-weekly to keep mission boards and missionaries informed on Christian work in China. Information from Chinese church magazines and other Chinese sources is passed on as objectively as possible, with a minimum of interpretation. When interpretation is necessary, it is enclosed in parentheses as the comment of the editor. ANNUAL RATES: Domestic, \$2.50; Overseas, Firstclass \$4.00, Secondclass \$3.00. Airmail \$5.00 in 15¢ zone, \$7.00 in 25¢ zone.

At the same time however he pointed out that the National Council has repeatedly gone on record as unalterably opposed to Communism. He said, "As is the case with many of our allies there may be a difference of opinion over a particular policy of resistance, but there can be no difference of opinion as to the necessity of opposing Communism with all the material and spiritual resources at our command."

After a dinner for him in Taipeh on December 21, he answered a multitude of questions on the subject of recognition, and one of the missionaries present has reported that his patience and courtesy were such that not even his most violent opponents lost their tempers. It seems apparent however from all the reports we have received that nobody's attitude was changed as a result of the interchange of views.

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

This book of devotional readings for a year was published by Mrs. Chas. E. Cowman in 1925, and then published in a Chinese edition about 1935. Mr. and Mrs. Cowman had been missionaries in Japan and Korea, and were then forced to retire from the mission field because of his health, and Mrs. Cowman collected the materials for this book during the five or six years in which he was fighting a losing battle for life. It is understandable therefore that in the devotional comments of this book there should be a strong emphasis, and perhaps an over-emphasis upon the necessity for a quiet acceptance of trials and tribulations as coming from the Lord to chasten and purify the children whom He loves.

The book has evidently had a wide circulation in China, and had continued to be circulated and read apparently without any question until June or July last year. Then articles began to appear in Tien Feng questioning the correctness of this book, and contributors to the magazine argued both sides of this question for several issues. It was noticeable however that toward the end of the series of discussions the defenders of the book had pretty well been silenced.

Now after several months of silence the editor of Tien Feng returns to the question in the December 7 Tien Feng with two contributed articles which the editor officially endorses, announcing that this should now close the discussion. Sentence has been pronounced: the book is imperialist poison.

How do the writers arrive at such a conclusion regarding a book in which nothing is said about political or economic matters, and in which a very personal type of piety is stressed? The reasoning is comparatively simple, and proceeds about as follows: 1. Human nature is essentially good, and mankind would have no particular trials and misfortunes if it were not for a bad social organization. 2. These trials and misfortunes can be overcome by determined opposition and an overturn of that bad social organization. 3. To counsel acceptance of them as the will of God is therefore playing into the hands of the imperialists and capitalists who wish a continuance of the society that makes those trials and misfortunes inevitable.

There is practically no attempt to justify this reasoning by appeal to the Scriptures. The only exception is the declaration that to find joy in tribulation is equivalent to calling bitter sweet and sweet bitter, a procedure which is denounced in Isaiah 5:20. The writer rather makes certain assumptions, and then reasons from them. "The God we believe in is righteous and loving and too holy to behold evil. When the ruling class tries to make out that God is on their side and approves of oppression, they commit great blasphemy, polluting His sacred name and perverting His truth."

With this positive and formal condemnation, it may perhaps be assumed that the book has been withdrawn from circulation, and any stocks of it still remaining destroyed. However, nothing is said about this.

OUTER MONGOLIA

Richard A. Geisler, of the Asia Foundation, has a good article on the Soviet Union's oldest and most isolated satellite, the Mongolian People's Republic, in the December Far Eastern Survey. This country has been Communist since 1921, but it has not made very much progress in the application of Communist principles to its economy, which is still only about 50% state-

owned. It is the nomadic life of the people that has been the greatest hindrance to a program of collectivization.

In the 39 years of this Communist state's history, Russia has managed to set a strong imprint upon it. The Russian Cyrillic script replaced the Mongol alphabet in 1946, and at the present time there are about 1,000 Mongols studying in Russian higher educational institutions, as compared with about 30 in Peking. Mongolian currency is pegged to the Russian ruble. The prime minister from 1928 to 1952, Marshal Choibalsan, was a stout supporter of the USSR. At his death in 1952 he was succeeded by Tsedenbal, also very pro-Russian. But Chinese influence has been increasing with the strengthening of the position of the Chinese People's Republic, and a more pro-Chinese leader, Dordj Damba, increasingly challenged Tsedenbal's position. He held a key position as First Secretary of the Communist Party, but a thorough-going purge in March of last year ousted him from all positions, and has evidently re-established Russian control.

Geisler finds a strong pan-Mongol sentiment in existence, which tends to pull together Outer Mongolia, Inner Mongolia (now belonging to China) and the Russian Buryat Mongol Autonomous Region. He considers too that Chinese influence is bound to increase, and the result may well be growing political tension in this isolated area of Asia. Tsedenbal himself would like to strengthen Outer Mongolia's position by greater ties with the outside world, and told an American correspondent in July that he would like to visit the United States.

PEDICAB WORKERS IN SHANGHAI

Miss Maud Russell, a former YWCA Secretary in China, publishes a small quarterly giving information about China, the "Far East Reporter." Last summer she was visiting in China, and while in Shanghai made a study of the pedicab worker situation there. The article she wrote has been reproduced in the Canadian Far Eastern Newsletter for January, and it is from that that we quote.

There are no longer any rickshas in Shanghai. Instead there are some 10,000 pedicabs, operated by about 27,000 pedicabmen, in place of the 80,000 ricksha pullers of the past. These pedicabs carry about 150,000 passengers a day, at a fixed rate of ten cents a kilometer. It is expected that ultimately they will be replaced by small taxis - last June there were about 200 of these on the streets of Shanghai - but that is still in the future. The more than 50,000 ricksha men that have been displaced in this process are now in steel production or other industries, and some have gone west to the new oil industry centers in Sinkiang and Ninghsia.

Miss Russell stresses the improvement that has taken place in their social situation. All of them under 45 years of age are now literate. There are fifteen lower middle schools for pedicabmen, with 12,558 attending. They now have opportunities for cultural life, and 8,000 of them participate in 40 dramatic groups, which put on as many as 260 plays last year. This improvement in general situation has received official recognition: Forty of them serve on District Councils, and 2,100 of them are cadres on Lane Committees. One has even been acclaimed as a National Model Worker, and another is the representative of the Shanghai pedicabmen in the National Youth Workers.

When we compare this with the ricksha pullers we used to know, it is apparent that a new dignity has come into their lives.

MISSIONARY NEWS

The American Bible Society has appointed three part-time secretaries whose duties are "to advise the Society in its missionary service to the denominations with which they are affiliated." All of them are former China missionaries: Bishop Lloyd Craighill (Episcopal, Wuhu), the Rev. A. H. Smit (Christian Reformed Church, Jukao, Kiangsu), and Dr. Henry S. Leiper (Congregational, Tientsin).

William Charles White, formerly Episcopal Bishop of Honan, died at his home in Toronto on January 24 at the age of 86. Other deaths reported from Canada some time in January (exact date not given) are: The Rev. Gillies Eadie, formerly Church of Canada missionary in Honan, and Miss Florence Jack, formerly with the Canadian Mission Press in Chengtu.

Mr. Eugene A. Turner, former YMCA Secretary in China, died at his home in Tryon, N.C. on December 10. Rev. E. J. Aeschliman, Methodist missionary, formerly of Tientsin but more recently in Old Umtali, Southern Rhodesia, died there on January 26. Mrs. H. P. Boot, who went out to the Amoy Mission of the Reformed Church in America in 1908, died at her home in Holland, Michigan, on December 24.

CHURCH NEWS

The Heilungkiang Provincial Committee of the Three Self Movement had its second meeting in Harbin October 16 to November 6, 1959, with 31 regular delegates and 16 visitors in attendance. Sun Yao-tsung was Chairman. Two government representatives were active throughout the meetings. Most of the resolutions passed concerned political matters - how to improve and deepen the political study, how to enter more completely into the economic production program. The only resolution concerning religious activities is very restrained - they resolved that "under the condition that it does not interfere with the task of socialization, religious activities be advanced." Apparently there are still some recalcitrant elements within the church, for they resolve "to struggle against all bad men and bad things that harm the interests of our country and its socialization, thoroughly root out the bad and reactionary elements that are hidden within the church, and cleanse the church of all illegal activities."

The Shanghai correspondent of the South China Morning Post (Hong Kong) reported that the western community in Shanghai celebrated Christmas in the traditional manner with carol singing and religious services. On Christmas morning a service was held in a house on the British consulate compound, which was well attended. A Christmas service was also held at the Endeavorers' Church for the English-speaking Protestant community of Shanghai. On Christmas Eve, a carol service was held in the same church, brought to a close with the singing of "Silent Night".

A letter from Hankow tells us that Li Jui, the former "wood oil king" there, is still working at the task of Bible translation (he has learned to read both Greek and Hebrew since retiring from business), which work he carries on without interference of any kind.

GENERAL NEWS

Buddhists in Taiwan are carrying on a literary campaign to discredit Christianity in an effort to regain popular support. A Buddhist magazine recently exploited the present political situation for this end by saying, "Christianity is the true source of Communism. It is a known fact that Communism has penetrated the Church in America and that many pastors are pro-Communist. So-called 'children of God' in the National Council of Churches recommend the recognition of Red China and its admission to the UN. This proves the true nature of Christianity." Another writer makes the claim that Abraham Lincoln and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were really Buddhists at heart. This claim is based on the fact that Lincoln once saved a pig's life and that Longfellow was so remorseful after shooting a bird that he never again carried a gun.

Endicott's January Newsletter praises very highly a book which I have not seen - Ross Y. Koen's *The China Lobby in American Politics*, published by the Macmillan Co. The thesis of the book seems to be that the plotting of the China Lobby was responsible for a disastrous reversal of American Far Eastern policy, that it forced out of the State Department the only people who had any real understanding of the Far Eastern situation, and created a situation where any criticism of Chiang Kai-shek was looked upon as treason to the U.S.

Work has begun on the building of a 150 kilometer railway line from Chengtu northwest through Kwanhsien to Wenchwan. This is a steady uphill climb, rising from 500 at Chengtu to 1,500 meters above sea level at Wenchwan.

Peking announced on November 18, 1959, that 200,000 Peking housewives had been freed from household burdens for work in factories and stores, nurseries and public welfare service centers set up and run by themselves cooperatively. Most of them, 160,000 are at work in industrial and handicraft workshops.

The Communist controlled island of Lappa, within full sight of Macao, was the scene recently of a great public trial of a 28-year-old officer who had tried unsuccessfully to escape to Macao. Before 5,000 people he was condemned to death and immediately executed. On the following day powerful loudspeakers that could be heard easily in Macao told the people of Lappa that all who attempted to escape from Communist territory would be brought before a People's Court and that they would be punishable by death. (From the Hong Kong Catholic monthly *Asia*, successor to the former "Mission Bulletin".)